

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application;

1. (Currently Amended) A lens barrier mechanism comprising:

a lens tube;

a lens barrier rotated in a direction orthogonal to an optical axis of an image pickup lens exposed ~~outward~~ from a front part of the lens tube for opening/closing the front part of the lens tube;

a first energizing member for rotationally energizing the lens barrier;

a slider engaged with the lens barrier and sliding in ~~[[the]]~~ a direction of the optical axis of the image pickup lens, ~~thus~~ thereby regulating rotation of the lens barrier;

a second energizing member for energizing the slider so as to rotate the lens barrier in a direction opposite to ~~[[the]]~~ an energizing direction of the first energizing member; and

a sliding mechanism for moving the slider.

2. (Currently Amended) The lens barrier mechanism as claimed in claim 1, wherein the sliding mechanism moves the slider ~~into~~ in a direction opposite to ~~[[the]]~~ an energizing direction of the second energizing member and rotates the lens barrier in the energizing direction of the first energizing

member, ~~thus~~ thereby opening or closing the front part of the lens tube, and wherein the sliding mechanism moves the slider ~~into~~ in the energizing direction of the second energizing member and rotates the lens barrier ~~into~~ in the direction opposite to the energizing direction of the first energizing member by the energizing force of the second energizing member, ~~thus~~ thereby closing or opening the front part of the lens tube.

3. (Original) The lens barrier mechanism as claimed in claim 2, wherein the first energizing member rotationally energizes the lens barrier in a direction of closing the front part of the lens tube, and the second energizing member energizes the slider toward the front part of the lens tube.

4. (Original) The lens barrier mechanism as claimed in claim 2, wherein the sliding mechanism has an engagement member for engaging a rotary motor with the slider, and

the engagement member drives the rotary motor to move the slider in the direction of the optical axis of the image pickup lens.

5. (Currently Amended) The lens barrier mechanism as claimed in claim 1, wherein the second energizing member ~~[[is]]~~ comprises a toggle spring.

6. (Currently Amended) The lens barrier mechanism as claimed in claim 5, ~~wherein as~~ further comprising a slide cam that is manually operated, wherein the toggle spring keeps energizing the slide cam in ~~[[the]]~~ an operating direction.

7. (Currently Amended) A lens barrier mechanism comprising:

a lens tube;

a lens barrier rotated in a direction orthogonal to an optical axis of an image pickup lens exposed ~~outward~~ from a front part of the lens tube for opening/closing the front part of the lens tube; and

an opening/closing mechanism for opening/closing the lens barrier and turning on or off a main power of an image pickup apparatus ~~body~~, interlocked with the opening/closing of the lens barrier.

8. (Currently Amended). The lens barrier mechanism as claimed in claim 7, wherein when the opening/closing mechanism is engaged with the lens barrier and rotated in an opening direction or closing direction of the lens barrier, the opening/closing mechanism is abutted against a main power switch of the image pickup apparatus ~~body~~ and turns on the main power.

9. (Currently Amended) An image pickup apparatus comprising:

a lens tube;

an image pickup lens housed in the lens tube and exposed outward from a front part of the lens tube;

a lens barrier rotated in a direction orthogonal to an optical axis of the image pickup lens for opening/closing the front part of the lens tube;

a first energizing member for rotationally energizing the lens barrier;

a slider engaged with the lens barrier and sliding in [[the]] a direction of the optical axis of the image pickup lens, ~~thus~~ thereby regulating rotation of the lens barrier;

a second energizing member for energizing the slider so as to rotate the lens barrier in a direction opposite to the energizing direction of the first energizing member; and

a sliding mechanism for moving the slider.